

Every Child Learning Every Day



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READY TO LEARN

Picture books for the alphabet

By Dr. Stan Steiner

Helping your child become familiar with the alphabet is fun with these picture books.

"M is for Music," by Kathleen Krull, illustrated by Stacy Innerst, 2003, Harcourt, Inc. From anthem and accordion to zydeco and zither, it is full of funky illustrations.

"G is For Goat," by Patricia Polacco, 2003, Philomel Books.

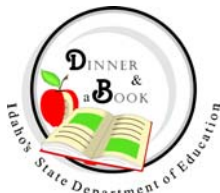
This book is a rhyming alphabet book dedicated to the antics of goats.

Through the humorous rhymes, children will learn much about what it takes to raise goats and what goats are really like: munching, head butting, hill climbing and tail wagging!

"Talk to Me About the Alphabet," by Chris Raschka, 2003, Henry Holt. This award winning author and illustrator makes learning the alphabet a natural and pleasurable experience for all beginners.

"Miss Bindergarten Plans a Circus With Kindergarten," by Joseph Slate, illustrated by Ashley Wolff, 2002, Dutton Children's Books. There is going to be a circus in Miss Bindergarten's classroom. Everyone in the kindergarten class helps to get the circus ready. Everything from decorating to inventing costumes is being done by the children.

Dr. Stan Steiner teaches Children's Literature at Boise State University. You may find more book reviews at <http://education.boisestate.edu/ssteiner>.



Programs help with medical care

Dear Reader:

One of the toughest challenges facing young working families is access to health care for their children.

Health insurance can be expensive for families with limited incomes. However, proper health care, immunizations and other services are as essential to young children as the many learning activities I endorse each month in this newsletter.

Help is available to families in Idaho.

It's called the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and if your family is without insurance and eligible, I encourage you to check out this option for your children.

The Idaho CHIP Program, often



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referred to as CHIP-A, provides insurance coverage for children and teens from low-income families. CHIP-B is a

state-managed individual health plan for eligible, uninsured children. Parents contribute \$15 per month for each eligible child.

Idaho also has available for low-income working parents an Access Card. Parents can choose to join their employer-sponsored health plan or buy an individual health plan. The state will pay a portion of the premium.

If you want to learn more about how to access these programs you can visit: www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov or call the Idaho Careline 2-1-1, or 1 (800) 926-2588.

Marilyn Howard

READY TO LEARN

Family libraries make books important

From Reading is Fundamental, www.rif.org

A home library doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive to provide rich reading experiences. But a good family library does involve time and space — time to find materials that will interest all the readers in our family, and space to keep and enjoy them. Here are some questions that might come to mind as you plan a family library:

Where is the best place to set up our library?

Many families have found that setting aside a spot in the home for a family library helps them make reading a part of family life. You don't need much space; a corner of a room with a bookshelf, comfortable furniture, and adequate lighting



is just fine.

How large should our library be?

It's variety that

counts, not size. Instead of focusing on the number of books, keep in mind the special interests and preferences of each member of the family. Ask your children what they like to read, and try to stock up on their favorite subjects and authors.

How should we display our collection?

In a way that invites the family to dig in! Sturdy bookcases, built-in shelves, and open magazine racks are excellent places to display and store reading material.

An orange crate works well, too. A floor-to-ceiling wall system with glass doors might be beautiful to behold, but would discourage a young reader who couldn't get to the books inside. Be sure to put reading material for the youngest readers on the lowest shelves.

What kinds of reading materials should we include?

Anything goes in a family library. Paperback and hardcover books, a dictionary, an atlas, song books, magazines for parents and kids, newspapers, and even mail-order catalogs all have a place. Keep the ages and interests of family members in mind when selecting material, and get their suggestions.



RESOURCES

Play is life for young children

From the Better Kid Care Project of the Pennsylvania State University Cooperative Extension

"Let's go play!" "What can we play?" "Come on out and play!" These are some of the familiar and frequent cries of children. It seems impossible to think about childhood or young children without also thinking about play. Play and playing are vital parts of children's lives. For children, play is life itself.

Through play, children learn how to learn and how to do things. Children learn many things about themselves, others, and the world through play. They learn concepts, relationships, cause and effect, sizes, colors, textures, feelings, emotions, sensations, sounds, symbols, and language among other things.

Children's play behavior can be grouped into a few categories or types and is related to the materials and tools of play. These categories often overlap and are highly interrelated. Any given play behavior could fall into several play types.

Quiet play is likely to be encouraged by picture books, bead-stringing, pegboards, puzzles, doll play, coloring with crayons, etc.

Creative play has a broad meaning and play of this nature includes many things, such as painting, drawing, problem solving, music, dancing, getting along with others, play dough, sand, collage, the use of imagination, etc.

Active play can be stimulated by the use of balls, slides, swings, push-pull toys, sand and water play, and the use of indoor materials like rhythm band, bean bag toss, "dress-up" clothes, cars and trucks, etc.

Cooperative Play that requires more than one person, such as ball games, tag, see-saws, playing dolls or house, block building, some swings, hide and seek, etc.

Dramatic and creative play may also be called social play. In this type of play, children try out different kinds of life roles, occupations, and activities, such as firefighter, actor, actress, mother, dad, astronaut, dancer, singer, farmer, doctor, nurse, soldier, etc.

Manipulative play that involves the use of hands, muscles, and eyes. It helps to develop coordination and a wide variety of skills.

NUTRITION

Sample the harvest with carrot soup

It is the time of year when the earth releases the bounty of the harvest. It is a time when the fields across Idaho are alive with men, women, and machines as the bounty is collected.

Our children can participate in this exciting time as they pick the produce from the gardens they have grown with their families, childcare providers, preschool staff, grandparents, and other important people in their lives.



It is a time to learn about the beets, carrots, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, herbs, lettuce, onions, peppers, spinach, tomatoes, zucchini, squash and other wonderful produce from the garden.

The great benefit is to now take this bounty from the garden to the table. What a wonderful experience to eat what each child has helped to grow. What a great accomplishment as each child realizes "I can grow things."

The children can help prepare this soup with the carrots from the garden.

Carrot Soup from Team Nutrition Iowa

5 cups of chicken broth
1 pound of carrots from the garden; washed, peeled and chopped

1 large clove garlic
1 tsp salt and pepper (optional)

1. To the 5 cups of broth add the carrots, garlic, salt and pepper.

2. Simmer carrots for about 20 minutes, or until quite tender.

3. Put the soup into a blender and blend to a smooth texture.

Serve this as a snack idea for 1 to 5 year old: 7/8 cup Carrot Soup and 1/2 whole wheat English

READY TO LEARN

Imitating, making sounds builds listening skills

Sound games are fun ways for adults to help children build their listening skills.

Birth to 1 year – Identify and name common sounds you hear when you are with your child, such as the telephone ringing, dogs barking, music playing, etc. Allow children to make sounds by childproofing drawers and cabinets that will let them bang pots and other non-breakable objects. Describe the sounds they make.

1 to 3 years old – Play simple sound identification games such as "What sound does a _____ make?" At first, parents should provide (and demonstrate) the answer. "What sound does a dog make? A dog goes bark." Demonstrate "voices:" such as loud outside voices, quieter inside voices and whispers

3 to 5 years old – Ask your child to identify sounds you hear. Listen to/sing along with reading and recordings of books and children's music. During a walk in your neighborhood, identify or ask your child to identify sounds he or she hears.

Skills needed for kindergarten – Listen and follow simple directions.



INFORMATION

Understanding learning styles can help reach children

Preschool children, like everyone, learn through a variety of ways. But as children grow they may develop a preference for one style over another.

Four of the most widely recognized styles are:
Visual learners (65 percent of population),
Auditory learners (30 percent), and
Kinesthetic/tactile learners (5 percent).

Recognizing your child's style can help you tailor effective activities to build a positive learning environment.

Visual learners learn best

when information is shown to them. They can either favor words (verbal) or pictures (nonverbal) and benefit from blackboard use and visual displays.

Auditory Learners learn best through lecture or discussion, they respond to voice and language.

Auditory Learners respond best to the traditional classroom environment.

Kinesthetic and Tactile Learners learn best through actively exploring the physical world.

Kinesthetic learners will learn best when the whole body is engaged, tactile learners

will learn best through the sense of touch.

Kinesthetic and Tactile learners respond well to activities such as role-playing and skits.

Everyone learns through a combination of these styles, but recognizing your child's strengths can help parents and caregivers meet the child's needs.

As educators focus on reaching students with different learning, more varied techniques are being seen in the classroom.

source: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/cs/tch-rce/pages/tch-tip/sec/learning-styles.html>